

Today's News - Tuesday, July 17, 2012

- A look at whether the U.K.'s decade of gallery building boom is paying off - it seems to depend on who you ask ("These are well intentioned initiatives but they're sometimes rather naive").
- Meanwhile, the West Kowloon Cultural District in Hong Kong names an impressive shortlist to design its first arts venue.
- Goldberger weighs in on Gehry's Eisenhower Memorial and some of the underlying problems surrounding the controversy: "How do you design a memorial to effectiveness?"
- Riechers offers a fascinating look at the history - and future - of NYC's Roosevelt Island (we'll reserve opinion re: Kahn's rather stark, barren-looking FDR Memorial until we see it in person).
- de Monchaux cheers SHoP's works-in-progress on Manhattan's East River: "There's a constellation of humane details...negotiating between the human and urban scale."
- Rosenbaum uses her recent visit to Hardy's "sleek, functional" Claire Tow Theater at Lincoln Center to give a shout-out to Kimmelman, who "finally reviews architecture!"
- Davies hands out scant sympathy to architecture critics and professional journals, but what disappoints him most are the "institutions that do have a remit to evaluate the quality of buildings - our architectural schools," which "have given very little attention to this task."
- A terrific look at the challenges faced by communities dealing with thousands of now-closed gas stations: in some cases, "former neighborhood blight" is being transformed into new downtown centers - but "it is not always easy to persuade developers."
- Badger offers an amusing reminder of what "a former urban planner and mad-scientist/illustrator" envisions for gas stations "when hardly anyone uses gas."
- NYC is about to launch what could be the largest bike share program in the country, but will it work? "NYC has the potential to be the biking capital of the world" (on the other hand...).
- The Kuala Lumpur Design Forum offered multiple takes on the creative process: "Put three architects in a room, and you'll get five opinions."
- Eyefuls of Arch Record's (refreshingly, not totally starchitect-studded) 2012 China Awards (great presentations!).
- Deadlines loom: presentations proposals for 2013 Environments for Aging Conference + Arch Record 2012 Design Vanguard competition.
- Call for entries: USITT International 2013 Architecture Awards for excellence in the design of theater projects.
- One we couldn't resist: if you're in a swelter-zone today, but chilling in an air conditioned space, sing Happy 110th Birthday to AC inventor Carrier (we sure will!).

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Has art gallery boom paid off? Over the past decade, bold and costly new art galleries have sprung up in towns from Margate to Middlesbrough in the hope of regenerating underloved areas and bringing modern art to the masses. Has the strategy worked? "These are well intentioned initiatives but they're sometimes rather naive" ... - BBC News

Shortlisted Design Teams Announced by West Kowloon Cultural District Authority for its First Arts Venue: Xiqu Centre, one of the first landmark buildings for the District, scheduled for completion at the end of 2015. -- BTA + RLP Company (Bing Thom Architects/Ronald Lu and Partners); Foster + Partners/O Studio Architects; Mecanoo architecten/Leigh & Orange; Safdie Architects; Wong & Ouyang/Diamond Schmitt [links]- West Kowloon Cultural District Authority (WKCD)

A Monumental Conflict: ...the effort to memorialize the 34th president—with a monument...pitting Eisenhower's grandchildren against...Frank Gehry...revisions haven't satisfied either the family or the National Civic Art Society...Part of the problem...is that Eisenhower evokes few intense feelings...How do you design a memorial to effectiveness? By Paul Goldberger- Vanity Fair

Behind the Island Curtain: Roosevelt Island has always been a world unto itself. With a new tech campus and memorial and park underway, New Yorkers will soon have more reason to visit...densely layered with projects reflecting the social ideals of each subsequent era. By Angela Riechers -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM); James Renwick Jr. (1857); Philip Johnson; John Burgee; Josep Lluis Sert; WRT; Louis Kahn [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Back From the Future: SHoP's East River Works-in-Progress: There's a constellation of humane details...continues a slow renewal, with projects like the Hudson River Park and the High Line, of the city's neglected public spaces...Pier 15 is the most building-like of these projects to date...negotiating between the human and urban scale... By Thomas de Monchaux -- Ken Smith Landscape Architect [images]- Curbed

Hugh Hardy's Lincoln Center Theater: NY Times' Kimmelman Finally Reviews Architecture! My recent experience at sleek, functional Claire Tow Theater...the small glass box atop the larger Vivian Beaumont Theater. By Lee Rosenbaum -- H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture; Renzo Piano; Tod Williams Billie Tsien; Paul Rudolph; Jean Nouvel [links]- ArtsJournal

Are architecture reviews critical? I have a lot of sympathy for architecture reviewers. Newspapers don't provide enough space...I don't extend that sympathy...to professional journals as they have space...What disappoints me most though is that those institutions who do have a remit to evaluate the quality of buildings – our architectural schools – have given very little attention to this task. By Alan Davies - Crikey (Australia)

A Clean New Life for Grimey Gas Stations: Thousands of gas stations have closed in the last 20 years, leaving vacant properties at busy corners that can be attractive locations for new businesses...former neighborhood blight has become a new downtown center...But it is not always easy to persuade developers...might be an eyesore in some communities, in others they are treasured slices of Americana. -- ODA-Architecture- New York Times

What Might Gas Stations Look Like When Hardly Anyone Uses Gas? ...what do we do with these 116,855 gas stations we've already built? Steven M. Johnson, a former urban planner and mad-scientist/illustrator...envision the future of the gas station, and his ideas are just the right kind of whimsy to get this discussion going. By Emily Badger [images, links]- The Atlantic Cities

New York City set to begin rolling out nation's largest bike share program: ...could potentially transform the way that New Yorkers get around...will the share program usher in broader acceptance of the bike? ..."NYC has the potential to be the biking capital of the world" ... [links]- Gotham Gazette (NYC)

"About making": The creative process takes time, effort and a little ingenuity as seen in the design approaches showcased at the Kuala Lumpur Design Forum (KLDF)... "Put three architects in a room, and you'll get five opinions" ... "The problem with us in Malaysia is that we tend to not appreciate the space we have and we just concrete

"all of it" -- Malaysian Institute of Architects/Pertubuhan Akitek Malaysia (PAM); Tony Liew Voon Fun; Ryuji Nakamura; Takenouchi Webb; Lim In Chong/Inchscape- New Straits Times (Malaysia)

Good Design Is Good Business China Awards 2012 -- Neri&Hu Design and Research Office; Rocco Design Architects; WOHA/Institute of Architectural Design & Research Taiyuan University of Technology; Urbanus Architecture and Design; Vector Architects; Aedas Limited; One Plus Partnership; Gensler; Moore Ruble Yudell; AECOM; Johnson Fain; TAO (Trace Architecture Office); Zaha Hadid [slide shows]- Architectural Record

Deadline reminder: Call for entries/Call for presentations: 2013 Environments for Aging Conference, April 7-10, 2013, New Orleans; deadline: August 10, 2012- The Center for Health Design

Call for entries: 2012 Design Vanguard competition; deadline: August 10- Architectural Record

Call for entries: USITT 2013 Architecture Awards for excellence in the design of theatre projects (international); deadline: September 1, 2012- United States Institute for Theatre Technology (USITT)

A Very Cool Birthday: Given the searing heat in NYC and other locales this week...July 17 marks the 110th anniversary of the invention of modern air conditioning. Hooray! ...if you're lounging comfortably in a mechanically cooled room, be sure to raise a glass...to the inventor Willis Carrier. - Architectural Record

-- Park Associati: The Cube, London, UK...a nomadic, stateless and cosmopolitan piece of architecture, a pavilion designed to host a small, temporary restaurant.
-- Gabriela Gomes: Shelter ByGG, Guimarães, Portugal...a mobile, sustainable and Itinerant sculpture installed in a public space.

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